

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1234
WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 2175

E.O. 211652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR PDIP OVIP IN US
SUBJECT: PRESS COVERAGE OF MRS. CARTER'S MEETING WITH PM
GANDHI

REF: NEW DELHI 2140

1. ALL OF TODAY'S DELHI PAPERS PROMINENTLY CARRY ARTICLES REPORTING ON MRS. CARTER'S MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER ON FEBRUARY 13 AND ALSO ON HER PARTICIPATION IN FUNERAL CEREMONIES FOR PRESIDENT AHMED. MOST PAPERS CARRY THE SAMACHAR REPORT ON THE MEETING. ACCORDING TO THE SAMACHAR ITEM, MRS. CARTER, ACCOMPANIED BY JAMES (CHIP) CARTER AND CHARGE SCHNEIDER MET WITH THE PM FOR 45 MINUTES. OTHERS PRESENT WERE SANJAY AND RAJIV GANDHI AND THEIR WIVES. THE REPORT QUOTES MRS. CARTER TELLING THE PRESS AFTERWARDS THAT IT WAS A "GOOD MEETING" AND ADDS THAT MRS. GANDHI WAS DEEPLY TOUCHED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S MOTHER AND HIS SON HAD COME FOR THE FUNERAL. REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM AMERICAN NEWSMEN, THE PM WAS REPORTED TO SAY THAT INDO-US RELATIONS WERE GOOD AND "I HOPE THEY GET BETTER". MRS. CARTER IS REPORTED TO HAVE ALSO SAID THAT RELATIONS ARE GOOD. ASKED IF MRS. CARTER HAD BROUGHT A MESSAGE, THE PM SAID THAT SHE HAD BROUGHT THE PRESIDENT'S
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GOOD WISHES. THE SAMACHAR ITEM REPORTS MRS. GANDHI AS SAYING "WE ARE HAPPY" THAT CARTER HAD BEEN ELECTED PRESIDENT. RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS IF MRS. CARTER HAD BROUGHT AN INVITATION TO VISIT THE US, MRS. GANDHI IS QUOTED AS SAYING "THIS IS HARDLY THE TIME WHEN I CAN GO", BUT ADDED "SHE (I.E. MRS. CARTER) SAID THAT SHE WOULD LIKE TO SEE ME" IN THE US. TWO PAPERS CARRIED STORIES ON THE MEETING BY

THEIR OWN CORRESPONDENTS: THE INDIAN EXPRESS VERSION WAS BASICALLY A REHASH OF THE SAMACHAR ITEM. THE REPORT IN THE STATESMAN ALSO CONVEYED ESSENTIALLY THE SAME POINTS AS THE SAMACHAR PIECE BUT ADDED SOME FURTHER INFORMATION, SUCH AS THE FACT THAT MRS. CARTER HAD SERVED AS A VOLUNTEER NURSE WITH THE PEACE CORPS IN MAHARASHTRA. THE STATESMAN CORRESPONDENT ALSO WROTE THAT MRS. CARTER HAD MADE HER COMMENTS ON INDO-US RELATIONS "WITH THE AIR OF A CONSUMMATE DIPLOMAT".

2. NEWSPAPER REPORTS ON THE MEETING, MANY FRONT-PAGED, FEATURED SUCH HEADLINES AS: "MRS. CARTER HOPES FOR BETTER TIES: (PRO-CONGRESS NATIONAL HERALD), "PM MOVED BY CARTER'S GESTURE" (INDIAN EXPRESS), AND "PM'S CORDIAL MEETING WITH MRS. L. CARTER" (HINDUSTAN TIMES). ONLY THE PRO-CPI PATRIOT CARRIES THE ITEM UNDER THE GENERAL HEADING "DIGNITARIES CALL ON THE PM". TWO PAPERS CARRY PHOTOS OF MRS. CARTER WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, ONE OF WHICH (HINDUSTAN TIMES) SHOWS A SMILING SANJAY STANDING NEARBY. THE OTHER PAPER (NATIONAL HERALD) CARRIES A PICTURE SHOWING MRS. GANDHI FLANKED BY MRS. CARTER AND CHIP CARTER.SCHNEIDER

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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